

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BAMA KO 03315 132210Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 HA-05 IO-13 ACDA-12
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AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, MILI, ML, XA

SUBJ: PRESS CONFERENCE BY MALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

1. SUMMARY. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE REPORTED IN THE OFFICIAL DAILY L'ESSOR OF JULY 4, 1978, MALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ALIOUNE BLONDIN BEYE TOOK THE OCCASION OF THE UPCOMING KHARTOUM OAU AND BELGRADE NON-ALIGNED SUMMITS TO DISCUSS THE GENERAL THRUST OF MALIAN DIPLOMACY AFTER THE ABORTIVE COUP OF FEBRUARY 28. IN ADDITION, FOREIGN MINISTER BEYE SPECIFICALLY DISCUSSED MALIAN POSITIONS ON THE WESTERN SAHARA AND INTER-AFRICAN MILITARY FORCE QUESTIONS, AS WELL AS THE DELAYED SAHARA HEADS OF STATE MEETING, ORIGINALLY
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PAGE 02 BAMA KO 03315 132210Z

SCHEDULED IN BAMA KO FOR JUNE 24-28, 1978. END SUMMARY.

2. BEYE BEGAN HIS NEWS CONFERENCE BY RESTATING THE FIVE BASIC POINTS WHICH, ACCORDING TO HIM, GOVERN MALIAN FOREIGN POLICY DECISIONS: (A) NON-INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES, (B) NON-ALIGNMENT, (C) PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF

CONFLICTS, (D) SELF-DETERMINATION, AND (E) INVIOABILITY OF FRONTIERS. WITHIN THIS FRAMEWORK, BEYE DECLARED, MALI WILL WORK FOR PEACE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. NOTING THAT NO NATION IN THIS AGE OF INTERDEPENDENCE CAN REMAIN ISOLATED, BEYE NEVERTHELESS EMPHASIZED THAT MALI IS AND WILL REMAIN A NON-ALIGNED COUNTRY, A MEMBER OF NEITHER THE EASTERN NOR THE WESTERN BLOC.

3. BEYE ATTRIBUTED THE DELAY IN THE CONVENING OF THE SAHARA HEADS OF STATE SUMMIT (BAMAKO 2935) TO "CERTAIN CONDITIONS REMAINING TO BE FULFILLED," WITHOUT SPECIFYING THE NATURE OF THESE CONDITIONS. HE EXPRESSED OPTIMISM THAT THE CONFERENCE WOULD BE HELD EVENTUALLY, NOTING THAT THE HEADS OF STATE OF ALGERIA, LIBYA, NIGER, AND MALI HAD ALREADY MET ON THREE PREVIOUS OCCASIONS, AND HE FURTHER STATED HIS OPINION THAT SOME SORT OF PERMANENT STRUCTURE SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED. (IN THIS DISCUSSION OF THE SUMMIT, MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THE LIST OF "SAHARAN" STATES.)

4. DISCUSSING THE WESTERN SAHARAN PROBLEM, BEYE REAFFIRMED THE OFT-PROPOUNDED POSITION THAT, IN CONFORMITY WITH THE OAU AND UN CHARTERS, AND GIVEN ITS FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA AS WELL AS MOROCCO, MALI FAVORED A SOLUTION GOVERNED BY THE PRINCIPLES OF SELF-DETERMINATION. HE FURTHER INDICATED THAT MALI WOULD "NOT BE OPPOSED" TO BEING HOST TO A SUMMIT CONCERNING THE WESTERN SAHARA DISPUTE AND DESIRED THAT A METHOD BE FOUND TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

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PAGE 03 BAMAKO 03315 132210Z

5. THE INTER-AFRICAN FORCE, PROPOSED BY THE FRENCH IN THE WAKE OF THE SHABA INVASION, CAME UNDER STRONG CRITICISM FROM BEYE. HE STATED THAT, WHILE MALI WAS NOT OPPOSED TO THE CONCEPT OF THIS TYPE OF FORCE, SUCH A FORCE SHOULD RESULT FROM AFRICAN INSPIRATION RATHER THAN THE URGING OF PARIS, SHOULD BE UNDER THE AUSPICES AND CONTROL OF THE OAU, AND SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE LIBERATION OF THOSE COUNTRIES STILL UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION.

6. COMMENT: BEYE'S STATEMENTS (PARA 4) CONCERNING A POTENTIAL SUMMIT IN BAMAKO ON THE WESTERN SAHARA DISPUTE (COMPARED WITH THE LIMITED LIST OF STATES PER PARA 3 SHOWN AS INTENDED CONFEREES AT THE POSTPONED JUNE 24-28 HEADS OF STATE CONFERENCE), MIGHT LEAD TO THE BELIEF THAT THE POSTPONED CONFERENCE WAS NOT FOR THE PURPOSE OF A MALIAN MEDIATION OF THE SAHARA CONFLICT, AS HAD BEEN SPECULATED. ON THE OTHER HAND, DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN PERSUADING MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA TO SIT AT THE SAME TABLE WITH ALGERIA AND LIBYA MAY BE PRECISELY THE "CERTAIN CONDITIONS" NOT FULFILLED, FORCING THE DELAY.

BYRNE

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